

Monte Carlo's War Time Tales Augment Other Charms



SUMMER VISITORS ON THE TERRACE BELOW THE CASINO AT MONTE CARLO AT OUTBREAK OF THE WAR.

(By a Special Correspondent.)

MONTE CARLO, Jan. 23.
ONE of the strangest sights ever witnessed at Monte Carlo was enacted on the outbreak of the war. All day on August 2, 1914, there were rumors that Germany had declared war. The bulletin board in the atrium of the Casino grew steadily longer and the reports more alarming, but with their usual oblivion the players kept steadily on, absorbed by their ruling passion.

The day was cloudless and beautiful, the green blinds of the Casino were drawn down to shut out the too dazzling sunlight, and a soft breeze from the Mediterranean filtered through in a refreshing draft. August is what is known as the dead season at the resort, when only those who love roulette better than anything else on earth have lingered on, and when big plungers come from afar to try their luck.

The hand played trivial airs on the terrace under the shadow of the Casino, their audience composed chiefly of women and children, families of the Monégasques, who are not permitted to enter the playing rooms. There was scarcely a sound to break the stillness of a hot summer afternoon except the click of silver and gold on the tables. Non-players strayed into the rooms from time to time in search of acquaintances, looking rather excited, but they got cold comfort when they attempted to whisper panicky war news into the ears of the busy players. Thus the afternoon wore on to 6 o'clock.

Croupiers are trained to a sphinxlike impassiveness from which they are expected never to depart even under the most exciting circumstances.

The most persistent players are men and women who have passed the heyday of youth, who for one reason or another have broken their home ties, who have left ambition behind them, and who, finding themselves in possession of a sure income, are delighted to discover a new and absorbing interest—roulette. They punt about in a small way, trying to get back to-day what they lost yesterday. Occasionally these people get into squabbles and spats, may be it is over only a five franc piece, and these disputes have been known on occasions to degenerate into hair-pulling and fainting fits.

One summer afternoon the Casino was struck by lightning, the electric current ran down and gave a pyrotechnic exhibition in one of the great overhanging chandeliers, explosion after explosion, making all the players jump from their seats and run for the doors. But through it all the croupiers sat impassively in their places, the ball went on spinning until order was restored and the players were all back in their seats.

War Breaks the Spell.

The croupiers look the same players in the face year after year and never know them; they meet them in the streets and never recognize them. But on the memorable day when the carnage broke out which was to sweep the world the croupiers were nervous, and as the day wore on their nervousness increased. They cast hurried and meaning glances at their chiefs, spoke to one another in an undertone across the tables, even lost the count and paid out either too much or too little money.

The players were annoyed and showed it, and for the first time a keen observer might read behind the croupier's impenetrable mask something of the contempt he felt for the people around the tables, who, under such circumstances, could go on playing.

Toward six o'clock the demands of the croupiers on their chiefs became more peremptory, defiant even, and one after another as they could be spared they began shoving their chairs up against the table and quietly stealing out. Then the chiefs also began climbing down from their high perches, and they, too, disappeared. The players took up the rattleaux (rakes), and began serving themselves, placing their own money and raking it in when it won. Here and there a table was closed, when there were not men enough left to run it. Now the floorwalkers and inspectors began walking up and down in excited groups, and everything became pandemonium. The players, some of them with their money still in their hands, engaged in conversations with the employees, all barriers were broken down and the Casino was in a panic. It was war! war! Every one was asking for news.

Off to the Front.

These men knew where their duty lay; a voice stronger than that of their chiefs was calling them, the voice of their country. They had all done their three years' military service, and they well knew that in case war was declared they were to report to their barracks within twenty-four hours.

The scene that night at the depot was one never to be forgotten. The station was crowded with men, some already in their uniforms and with their guns and equipment. All in Monaco, fathers, mothers, wives, sweethearts and children, were there to bid their beloved soldier boys a tearful farewell. When the train pulled out for Nice soldiers were hanging out of the windows, standing on the platforms and crowding wherever they could hold on. For days, whenever a train came through, the same scene was repeated.

The *diablos bleus* (blue devils) came down from their barracks in the mountains in their dark blue uniforms, the *deret* (Tam o'Shanter) sitting jauntily on one side of the head. These soldiers looked as hard as nails, fit for any fray. Some companies brought their mascots, dogs generally, and their mountain music, bag-pipes and bugles, the playing of which as the train rolled into the station sent women into hysterical fits of weeping.

All night long there was an incessant roar of passing trains, filled with soldiers and horses, ammunition and general supplies. There is something more formidable in the spectacle of a country aroused to war, in the great act of mobilization, than in war itself. Men become gods when fired by the spirit of patriotism, and all things which were inanimate before seemed suddenly to live and move. Then the line of demarcation between man and woman became more acute, and the difference between youth and age suddenly widens into a great chasm. On that day when Germany threw down her presumptuous gauntlet to the world, all the able bodied young men of the insulated nations stepped, ran, threw themselves across the chasm to pick it up. The old men were left behind to do the civil duties, hold the families together and help the women to carry on life as best they might.

Wild Rumors Afloat.

Strangers on the Riviera began asking themselves what was going to become of them and what they had better do. At Monte Carlo the wildest rumors were afloat. One was to the effect that the Germans were going to invade France first by way of the Alps and innocent ladies sat all day in the beautiful gardens, some with powerful field glasses, keeping a sharp lookout for the first German head that might pop up over the top in order to be ready to run and hide as the demons came yelling like fiends down the mountain slope.

There was another rumor, no less absurd than the first, to the effect that a German fleet was approaching the southern shores of France by way of the Mediterranean, that they were going to turn their long range guns on Monaco and after having demolished and captured it they would make it their stronghold, from which they could launch out and capture the English troops known to be on their way to Marseilles from Egypt and India.

Under these circumstances it was rather difficult for strangers, especially Americans, to decide which way to run. To go to Paris seemed madness, to start across the ocean seemed hazardous and to stay in Monaco, if rumors were to be trusted, there was imminent danger of annihilation.

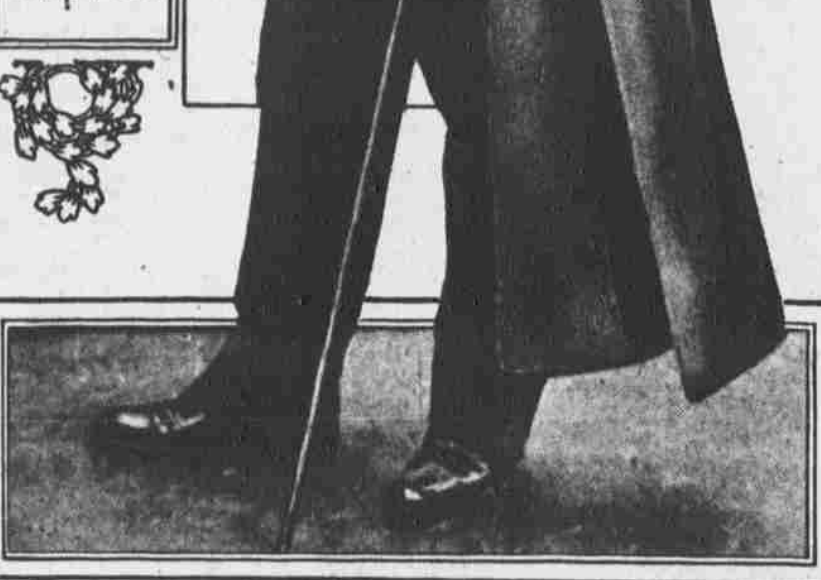
The days wore on, the excitement increased and every day fresh rumors were afloat. One was to the effect that those so left were in danger of starvation, that there was not enough foodstuffs on hand to feed the population, the native Monégasques, and that strangers would be left to shift for themselves. The instinct of self-preservation is the strongest one in human nature, and in war it becomes often a hideous ego. Would we be attacked by the Germans from over the mountains, would we receive a shower of shot and shell from the sea, or would we be left to die miserably of slow starvation? Those were the first burning questions. But happily this egotistic state of mind did not last long, as will soon be seen. The better, nobler side of human nature rose above the first panicky instinct.

The Spy Hunt Begins.

Besides there were a great many other rumors going the rounds in Monte Carlo which diverted attention from personal griefs. Chief of these was that concerning the German spies said to be hiding in the principally under various disguises. These were being hunted by the police and out and out Germans, those known to be such, were being rounded up daily and conducted to the depot, and while this was done quietly and in secret still a great many amusing and startling things came to light. There were two druggists in Monte Carlo, Zimmermann in the Condamine and Stahl in Boulevard des Moulins, both Germans. The great military stronghold of the Alpes Maritimes is Mont Agel, which lies in the foothills overlooking the Mediterranean above Monaco and easily reached from Monte Carlo by the funicular railway, with something of a climb beyond.

Stahl and Zimmermann were both capable druggists, popular with their patrons. Stahl was especially popular with women, as he

CAMILLE BLANC, UNCROWNED KING OF MONTE CARLO.



made the best cold cream in the place. If you went into the shop a second time he surprised you greeting you by name. "Good morning, Miss or Mrs. So-and-so," he would call out pleasantly.

Both these men were expert chemists and they were devoted herbists. They spent their Sundays in the mountains hunting herbs—in the vicinity of Mont Agel, it developed afterward.

No sooner had war been declared than the rumor flew like wildfire all around that Stahl and Zimmermann were nothing other than German spies, that Stahl was of the German Etat Major and that both had succeeded in getting away. Zimmermann had disguised himself as a milkman and had succeeded in reaching the Italian frontier. Stahl had gone boldly forth by train, but his baggage had been caught at Vingtelle.

This same Stahl, he who had tended so faithfully a poor consumptive English girl in Monte Carlo, who gave her some powerful German remedy, who exclaimed: "What ought I to do? The remedy is so powerful I am afraid it might kill her in her weakened state, and yet if I do not give it to her she is going to die anyway."

This man who all the time was helping to perfect the infernal machine which was to destroy the lives of men had qualms of conscience concerning the welfare of an invalid and to him unknown girl. It was this same Stahl who afterward became the internal governor of Longwy.

In anticipation of starvation a good many of the women laid in large supplies, which they hid among their belongings. One hospitable English lady who had plenty of money bought enormous quantities of commissary stuffs including hams and all brands of cured meats and sausages. These she proceeded to hang up in the hallway outside her apartment. But the weather was warm, the meats began to sweat and run grease, and the lady received notice to quit the building. She was very indignant, naturally.

Maps Hidden by Soup Cards.

There was a brand of condensed soups, German, put up in capsules, and these placed on cards, fifty on a card. These hung prominently in every grocery, and even the chemists sold them. One morning the police made a raid on all the shops where these German soups were to be sold, and without so much as by your leave they jerked the soup cards down and carried them all off. It had been discovered, through information secured in Stahl's baggage, it was said, that concealed behind the pasteboard of each one of those soup cards there was a complete map of the part of the country in which they were sold, giving the location of every bridge and stream, as well as the banks, post office, lodging places, police headquarters, and, in fact, all useful information for the German army when it should arrive. Rather neat soup cards.

When the English troop ships were due to arrive in the vicinity of Marseilles mysterious fires broke out in various parts of the mountains. They were strange, formal fires, not the raging kind that occasionally devastate these regions. These burned in spots and groups and dashes. A telegraph operator who knew the code might have read them, and they were popularly supposed to be, and probably were, signals giving information as to the location of the ships and their number.

An attractive Austrian woman who had been a resident of the Riviera for a long time had been dubbed the "Siren" because she had the trick of emitting a peculiar melodious whistle, a series of birdlike notes, as she walked through the gardens. Afterward it

was recalled that she was frequently soon conversing in low tones with strange men in sheltered nooks of the gardens.

She was not popular with the other women, and the day when as usual every one was sitting around the Camembert waiting for fresh bulletins to be posted up a chorus of hisses went around as the "Siren" was being conducted by three gendarmes across the open space to the depot. On that day every woman was thankful that she was not a German either by birth or allegiance.

In the snug little harbor of Monaco there balanced gracefully a smart little yacht, a Mercedes, property of M. Jelleneck, the notorious Austrian representative at Nice. Jelleneck is no more. He died during the war, in Switzerland. The Mercedes is still in the Harbor of Hercules, but it is sinking lower and lower in the water, and wears a dismantled aspect. L'Hirondelle, the scientific yacht of the Prince of Monaco, towers above it.

Exit Kurtz.

One rumor which nearly outdid all the others concerned a man who held a responsible position in the Casino—Kurtz, I think, by name. This man was German born, but had lived a great many years in France, had been made a French citizen in fact, although he had two sons in the German army. He had the handling of *vivats*. It is the custom of the Casino to furnish railroad transportation back to their homes for those who report that they have lost their all at the tables. Needless to say, many take advantage of this who have money to pay their own fare, but they think it a good way of getting even for their losses. When they return to Monte Carlo, if they ever do, they must refund the sum advanced before they can again enter the Casino.

Naturally, there was a great run on *vivats* at the declaration of war, as many men of all nations caught at Monte Carlo were obliged to at once return to their own countries for enlistment, or other pressing reasons. Now, according to the story, this Kurtz gave up lavishly of the money in which he was in charge—to the Germans, but to Russians, Serbs and other enemy nationalities he either gave very small sums or refused them outright.

This was brought to the attention of the authorities, and the master of the *vivats* was stealthily watched and shadowed, until the evidence against him was overwhelming and conclusive. Then a strong body of gendarmes fell upon him and took him into a private room, where he was searched. His clothes were literally stuffed with French bank notes, and he was evidently all prepared for flight. Besides his position in the Casino he carried on a lucrative real estate business at Beaulieu, where he lived. His house there was searched, and a powerful wireless apparatus was found concealed in a chimney. Exit Kurtz! He was among those reported later to have been shot.

The Casino was closed for a period of about two months, a few days after the breaking out of the war. The war bulletins from that time forth were posted in the vicinity of the Camembert, this being the central mart where the colony of strangers congregated daily for news and gossip. When the war bulletins lacked definite and exciting reports, these sprang up like magic among the crowd.

A conjecture of which people never tired was the one raised as to what the Casino had done with all the tons of gold and silver, amounting to millions, which was known to be on hand, and this was one of the strongest arguments in favor of those who insisted that the Germans were on the march to take Monaco. They wanted and would surely have all that money. But in the meantime, where was it?

There are always all wise ones in every crowd, those who know everything, and those



ON THE TENNIS COURTS AT MONACO

averred that the Casino had had constructed, for just such an occasion as this, deep tunnels running from under the vast pile of buildings far out under the bed of the Mediterranean, and that the piles of gold and silver were already safely stored there after the fashion of Monte Cristo. The Casino was closed, to be sure, but it was literally bristling with bayonets throughout the twenty-four hours of the day and at night it was kept brilliantly lighted this was all believed, in anticipation of an attack.

Submarines were the next scare. These had been seen lurking about in the bay and shelters of the coast, so it was claimed, by more than one eye witness. That these might be French scouting boats was not at all credited. Every one preferred to see disaster in the slightest movement. The discussions as to probable starvation could always be fallen back on, in case nothing more exciting took the attention elsewhere.

All this while Camille Blanc, the uncrowned king of Monte Carlo, walked quietly about, making the round of the Camembert several times a day with his hands behind his back, his fashion of walking, and he appeared as calm as if he were attending a summer picnic. To be sure he was followed and watched over by plain clothes men who never lost sight of him, and if there were almost daily reports of his assassination he appeared none the wiser and not at all disturbed. He perhaps never knew (or did he?) what confidence his presence inspired. He came down daily from his Villa Varaville, which is not in Monaco, but in France, just over the line, perched on an inaccessible rock overlooking the sea.

At last a few women spoke up, inspired by the light of superior reasoning powers. They said: "As long as Mr. Blanc is here there is certainly no danger of our starving to death, and if there is any real and imminent danger we are sure he will get us out in time."

This brave stand divided the field into two camps, and the confident ones began shaming the others for their selfishness, with the result that a large contingent of women started out to see if there was anything they might do to help in the war, instead of sitting worrying about their own safety, hundreds of miles away from the scene of actual hostilities. At that time Dr. Cailloux, director of the Monaco Hospital, let it be known that he was opening a series of conferences for the training of war nurses. This was a timely diversion, and some two hundred women began attending the lectures, thus relieving the strain on their mental faculties by directing their energies into more salutary channels.

First of the Wounded Arrive.

The first train of wounded arrived early in September, 360 poor fellows from Bar-le-Duc, all of whom had only received first aid on the battle field, and who had not had their clothes and their shoes off for forty days. From that time on, all the women players became ardent nurses, and the Riviera, that great unending labyrinth of hotels, became the place par excellence for the care of the wounded and the refugees.

The Casino opened its doors again a short time, but although the women rushed in to see that famous gold and silver about which there had been so much discussion, there was not a coin to be seen. Instead, the tables were covered with what looked like the candles on a Christmas cake, bright disks of celluloid in various colors and shapes depending on their value.

Today, the war long since ended, the Casino is still standing; no German invasion ever took place either by land or sea; on the contrary, there is not a German in sight among the vast throngs now crowding the Riviera. Several, however, did get across the line from Italy this week, and appeared on the streets of Mentone. They were stoned by the population, the police took them in, and as they did not have necessary papers, they were hurried back whence they came. They were thought to be escaped prisoners.

The celluloid chips are still being used on the tables in the Casino, and to this day no one of the curious has found out where the real money is still hiding. Stahl's drug store is still closed, and his name still hangs outside, but it is getting rusty. Zimmermann's place, in the Condamine, has been visited by many of the returning guests who saw Monaco through the first months of the war, but, alas, everything changes, and the shop of the "celebrated German herbist" has been replaced by another building, and the tennis balls whistle before his erstwhile doorway.

This is only the beginning of the season on the Riviera, which reaches its height about mid-Sept., but the crowds are already so great people are beginning to ask where the late arrivals will find shelter. The advantageous rate of exchange has brought thousands this year who never might probably have otherwise seen the Riviera. The difficulties of living at home, the scarcity of fuel, are other excuses which have given impetus to the floods

of visitors, and then to tell the truth, after five years of deprivation, the whole world seems to have gone amusement mad. So long without a holiday or a vacation of any kind, so benumbed by suffering and sorrow the most unselfish seem to feel that they have a right, that it is a duty they owe to themselves, to once more bask in the sunshine, to amuse themselves and to try to forget.

They are doing it all right, and the Riviera managers—the Riviera has managers, you know, although they work secretly and unseen—are doing their best to furnish, not only food and creature comforts, but there has been organized an unending string of amusements and diversions such as the modern world has never before witnessed. Ask any one if he has time to go to a theatre or a concert—tickets for these are floating about, a drug on the market. People pass them on from one to another, because they have some other more attractive amusement on hand—tennis, golf, the horse races at Nice, the pigeon shooting, Olympian games, skiing, snowshoeing, motor car excursions, tea, tango, bridge, and don't forget the celluloid chips!

Ciro's restaurant opened with a bang this week. That means the season has begun. The original *Ciro* is here, and his name isn't *Ciro* at all, but Capozzi. The original *Ciro* restaurant is on the *Galerie Charles le III*, alongside *Hôte Metropole*. *Ciro* is an Italian, and he has a hard time to make a go of it at first. But along came an American millionaire—the late James Gordon Bennett—who knew good cooking. He liked *Ciro's* cooking, so he advanced the necessary money until *Ciro* could stand alone. Now that name has gone all over the civilized world, where it stands among the gourmets as the sesame for flawless cuisine. *Ciro* himself has long retired, a millionaire now himself and a stockholder in the Casino, but the name goes on.

Now when you wish to get a seat at *Ciro's* on the *Galerie Charles le III*, you must reserve your table in advance, and *en passant* you might as well deposit a 500 franc note. You can pay the rest when the meal is finished, after you have degusté les vins (tasted the wines).

Among the Visitors.

Among those dining there at the opening I saw Mr. and Mrs. Edward Tuck, who always spend their winters at Monte Carlo, on account of Mrs. Tuck's health, but they are never seen in the rooms, and rarely at the theatre, except during the opera season. Mrs. Tuck is always busy with her large charities; in fact, the Tucks take their pleasure in that way.

The Duchess of Marlborough came over from the Eden Hotel at Cap d'Ail, and she was looking *averte*, and as young as ever, faultlessly gowned in black. She was with Mrs. Tiffany. The Duc and Duchesse Torlonia were dining with Marquis and Marquise Spinola. Lady de Bathe came in late. She wore a fetching gown in dark red, and her brown hair—it is still brown—was done in a simple Greek knot low at the back of her shapely head. Mme. de Bittencourt, herself a noted beauty, was with a party of Spanish grandees. In black satin, with some wonderful jewelry, her white hair crowned by a stunning hat, all eyes turned inevitably in her direction. Mme. Ephrussi (nee de Rothschild) was extravagantly gowned in some filmy concoction of lace and chiffon, showing off her marble white bust and shoulders.

Mme. Melba has arrived at the Hermitage. Miss Gertie Miller is at the Metropole, and Lucy Arbell at Hotel de Paris. Emma Calvé, who spends a great deal of her time at Nice, is booked for a series of charity concerts. A wedding was celebrated very quietly, almost secretly, at Nice this week. It was that of Mme. Soumille, first wife of Bolo Pasha, to M. Alexandre Prat of that city, and owner of a restaurant there.

Monte Carlo received a flying visit from two distinguished men this week, M. Paul Deschanel, President of the French Chamber, and with him M. Herriot, Mayor of Lyons, former Senator and Deputy for the Rhone. They stopped at the Metropole, which seems to be very much in vogue this season, perhaps on account partly of the tango tea so popular with the smart set there. One can take a turn *en passant*, and meet one's friends without the trouble of having to look them up.

A few American uniforms have made their appearance on the Riviera this week, to the joy of the population which has pleasant souvenir of the American soldiers who passed their vacations here during the war. These stray arrivals are accounted for by the fact that two American men-of-war are in the roads at Nice—the North Dakota and the destroyer Foote, coming from Constantinople. The advice boat Sacramento and the torpedo boat Eagle have now joined the first two and all have moved to the Bay of Villefranche. Admiral and Mrs. Raymond Rodgers, U. S. N., old habitués of the Riviera, are at Hotel Metropole.